FEB. 17-18, 2005

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association

Executive Notes

Your Provincial Executive Council met in St. John's on **February 17** and Joint Council (Branch Presidents and Provincial Executive) met on **February 18**. This issue of *Executive Notes* is a summary of major discussions and decisions that occurred at these meetings.

For further information contact any member of Provincial Executive or the staff person as indicated.

President's Report

The President reported to Provincial Executive on his activities since the last meeting. He has continued visiting schools across the province as part of the President's Visitation Program and has attended meetings and appointments in his capacity as President.

The President has been vocal in the media on the issue of teacher allocations, including several letters to the editor. He was interviewed by CBC *Radio Noon*, CBC TV, and VOCM on the Atlantic Accord, and by CBC Radio Corner Brook and Grand Falls-Windsor re school board restructuring. As well, several interviews took place on the issue of conditions in some schools due to flooding and leaking roofs.

Teacher Certification

Provincial Executive was provided with an update on the status of the Provincial Teacher Certification Committee. At its most recent meeting on February 16 the committee continued the regulations review which has been ongoing for some time. At this meeting there was an important agreement in principle with respect to expanding the options for credit for certification upgrading. Currently only full courses offered at accredited universities as part of degree or diploma programs are counted. If this regulation were to change it would allow for other options, such as a combination of university courses and other pre-approved professional experiences, to be credited towards upgrading. While there are many details yet to be determined, this is seen as an important step forward. The regulations review will continue to be a priority for this committee.

For further information contact Beverley Park, Professional Development Division.

Business from Standing Committees

All Committees

- The recommendations on resolutions to the 2005 BGM were accepted, as amended, for presentation at the 2005 BGM.

For further information contact Fred Douglas, President, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Table Officers

- The NLTA will proceed with the book project on tributes to teachers with the Faculty of Education. The costs will be shared with the Faculty.
- Further discussions will take place with the Department of Education and the Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association re school opening and closing dates.
- The NLTA will nominate Beverley Park for the 2005 CTF Special Recognition Award.
- The NLTA will nominate Denise Pike, President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils for the 2005 Public Education Advocacy Award.
- The recommendation on resolutions to the 2005 BGM were accepted, as amended, for presentation at the 2005 BGM.

For further information contact Fred Douglas, President, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Professional Issues in Teaching Committee

- Raymond Brushett of St. John's Centre Branch will be the recipient of the Barnes Award for 2005.

For further information contact Dana Burridge, Chair, Professional Issues in Teaching Committee, or Beverley Park/René Wicks, Professional Development Division.

Membership Benefits and Services Committee

- Seven pre-retirement seminars will be held in accordance with Association Policy, during the Fall of 2005 in the following locations: Corner Brook, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, Stephenville, and three in St. John's. The dates and sites will be determined by the Benefits and Economic Services Division, subject to hotel and presenters availability. Consideration will be given to combining seminars depending on registration numbers.
- For all future Bancroft Award submissions, handwritten nominations will not be considered and any award nominations that are not typewritten shall be returned to the nominating branch to be typed.
- Madonna Boone of the Baie Verte Peninsula Branch and Diane Curtis of the Taylor's Brook Branch will be the recipients of the Bancroft Award for 2005.

(see over)

- Clement "Ted" Murphy will be the recipient of the Allan Bishop Award for 2005.
- Myrtle Guinchard will be the recipient of the Special Recognition Award for 2005.

For further information contact Sean Noah, Chair, Membership Benefits and Services Committee, or Stefanie Tuff, Benefits and Economic Services Division.

JOINT COUNCIL

Association Priorities

A detailed review of the Association priorities for 2004-05 was presented to Joint Council. The NLTA administrative staff updated Provincial Executive and Branch Presidents on the objectives, time frames, and action update. The five priorities are: negotiating a collective agreement; teacher accountability/assessment/professionalism; curriculum issues; quality of teachers' work life; and membership awareness.

For further information contact Fred Douglas, President, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Collective Bargaining

In early January Branch Presidents were sent a questionnaire on Collective Bargaining and asked to use the questionnaire to determine the opinions of teachers within their branch. At the February Joint Council meeting Branch Presidents worked in small groups to share this information. The purpose of the sharing of this information is to shape the course for the upcoming round of collective bargaining.

For further information contact Fred Douglas, President, or Lloyd Hobbs, Assistant Executive Director.

Virtual Teacher Centre

A presentation was made to Joint Council by Alex Hickey, Coordinator of the Virtual Teacher Centre, providing an update of the Centre and information on the external evaluation report. The evaluation was conducted by North Atlantic TeleLearning Associates and provides a background to the establishment of the VTC and its subsequent successes. The report also examines challenges and sustainability questions for the VTC. Future directions and recommendations include implications for the NLTA, Department of Education, School Districts and the MUN Faculty of Education.

For further information contact Alex Hickey, Coordinator, Virtual Teacher Centre.

Group Insurance

A presentation was made to Joint Council on Group Insurance Cost Containment by Don Ash, Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division. The NLTA Health Insurance premiums have been increasing significantly in recent years. Group Insurance Trustees are seeking input from the Association leadership on what cost containment initiatives should be explored. Small group discussions followed the presentation to survey Joint Council members on what options Trustees might explore.

For further information contact Bill Chaisson, Chair, Group Insurance, or Don Ash, Benefits and Economic Services Division.

Association Budgets for 2005-06 and 2006-07

The Joint Council was provided with the draft budgets for 2005-06 and 2006-07. The Finance and Property Committee has recommended to Provincial Executive that in order to balance the budgets while maintaining programs and services, a combination of actions would have to be taken. These are reduce costs wherever possible, increase membership fees, and transfer some monies from the Centennial Trust Fund and the Reserve Fund. These options were discussed at Joint Council and Branch Presidents were provided with the opportunity for further input. The draft budget will be presented to BGM 2005 for debate and approval.

For further information contact Edward Moore, Chair, Finance and Property Committee, or Jim Fox, Treasurer.

Discussion Topics

The following topics were reviewed by Provincial Executive and/or Joint Council for follow-up or future direction: opening and closing dates for school; discretionary leaves; school board-teacher liaison committees; start time for teacher in-services; pooled pension fund; support for technology teachers; occupational health and safety; teachers right to speak out; and contact with MHAs.

For further information contact Fred Douglas, President, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of Provincial Executive is scheduled for **May 27-28** in **St. John's**. Executive will also meet for its pre-BGM meeting on Tuesday, **March 29**.

For further information contact Fred Douglas, President, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.